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ABSTRACT

Salisbury State University (Maryland) and the University of Maryland Eastern Shore are offering a joint Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT) degree. The departments of education at these institutions have formed a collaborative MAT program as a response to the challenges of reform in the University of Maryland system. The 2 institutions are 12 miles apart; one is a historically Black institution and the other has been predominately White. The initiative for the collaborative program has led to shared resources, shared faculty, and shared course offerings. Instead of duplication of similar programs at adjoining campuses, the combining of resources has enabled both institutions to offer teacher training at the graduate level for several areas of certification with lower institutional costs. The institutions use the same admissions requirements and similar curriculum except for differences based on the area of specialization for the degree being sought. Much of the document consists of the Memorandum of Understanding between the two institutions and a catalog description of the Master of Arts in Teaching Program. (JLS)

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COLLABORATIVE PROGRAMS

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EDUCATIONAL REFORM IN HARD TIMES:

Forging a Collaborative Partnership in Teacher Training

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EDUCATIONAL REFORM IN HARD TIMES:
Forging a Collaborative Partnership in Teacher Training

Presentation Abstract

The departments of education at the University of Maryland Eastern Shore and Salisbury State University have developed a collaborative Master of Arts degree program as a response to the challenges of reform in the University of Maryland System. This joint Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT) program has set a precedent for inter-institutional collaboration and serves as a model for further program development for initial teacher preparation at the graduate level. It has been recognized and acknowledged as a successful collaborative initiative by the University of Maryland System and is endorsed for implementation by the Maryland State Department of Education and the Maryland Higher Education Commission.

The University of Maryland System, like many state systems of higher education, faces the challenge of change. Through the first part of this decade, the University of Maryland System has struggled with downsizing, program elimination, and declining resources. The response of the System to these inevitable changes has been a series of strategic planning documents, ***Toward a State of Learning: Achieving the Vision in Hard Times***. Consistent challenges to the institutions within the University of Maryland System have included: elimination of program duplication, the need for increased collaboration among institutions, and the strengthening of institutional revenues.

At the same time that reform was occurring in the University of Maryland System, a call for reform in teacher preparation came from the Maryland Higher Education Commission and the Maryland State Department of Education. Institutions of higher education were challenged to reconsider basic tenets of teacher training. They were urged to revise teacher training programs in order to combine a strong academic foundation for teacher candidates with extensive internships and hands-on classroom experience.

The University of Maryland Eastern Shore and Salisbury State University, two of thirteen institutions within the University of Maryland System, responded to both of these challenges in their collaborative development and implementation of a joint Master of Arts in Teaching program. The University of Maryland Eastern Shore (UMES) is both an 1890 land grant and Historically Black Institution located in Princess Anne, Maryland. Salisbury State University (SSU), formerly a state teachers college, is located twelve miles away in Salisbury, Maryland. The missions of the two institutions are similar; both identify teaching as an institutional focus. The organizational structures and institutional identities of the two are understandably different.

In some ways, the two institutions were ideally poised to respond to the challenges of reform in higher education and in teacher education. In other ways, they were reluctant to face the uncertainty of change. How the universities optimized their strengths and overcame their hesitance to engage in change are important issues in understanding how the MAT program evolved.

Central to the successful implementation of the Master of Arts in Teaching program was an agreement by both campuses to share their faculty resources and facilities as appropriate to the needs of the students in pursuing their courses of study. The origins of the Master of Arts in Teaching program lie in long-range plans at SSU and UMES which include teacher preparation emphases as an integral part of campus priorities. The two institutions proposed to collaborate in teacher education in 1993. The collaboration was approved by the University of Maryland System Board of Regents, and, in the fall of 1993, SSU and UMES created an Inter-Institutional Forum on Teacher Education (IFTE) administered and operated by faculty from the two campuses. The University of Maryland System acknowledged the high quality, continuous collaborative efforts of UMES and SSU by awarding them significant resources to continue their work. Thus, the Master of Arts of Teaching program was developed in a climate which supported cooperative partnerships and ownership in operation.

Although each campus saw need for a Master of Arts in Teaching program, the initiative for the collaborative MAT program was the catalyst which really drove the program development. The concept of shared resources, shared faculty, and shared course offerings were extremely attractive in the area of secondary education. Secondary education methods courses were often costly because of small enrollments in several courses. The combination of resources enabled both institutions to offer teacher training at the graduate level for several areas of certification with lower costs.

The curriculum for the MAT was planned to be consistent with the redesign of teacher education in Maryland. Accordingly, admissions requirements focused on students' having a strong academic background in their content area, strong in both comprehensiveness and in currency. The course work for the program was planned to emphasize graduate level research, technology, extensive field experiences in addition to a semester long internship, and the development of student portfolios. Because the MAT is designed for individuals whom we often categorize as "career changers," these students possess bachelor's degrees in content areas, but have little or no teacher preparation background or experience in education. For this population, field experiences are essential for educational as well as socialization purposes. Accordingly, field experiences begin at the outset of the MAT program and continue to the end. The curriculum emphasizes the importance of students having common, consistent field experiences which will extend throughout the program. The continuity and cohesiveness of the field experiences are essential in order for students to conduct research inquiries for the program. Experience has shown us that the involvement of faculty from both campuses working together in course development was an invaluable asset to program continuity as well as program implementation.

While the curriculum stands as evidence of leadership in the reform of teacher education, the Memorandum of Understanding incorporated into the program proposal serves as a true model for collaborative programs which may be developed after the MAT. The challenge of developing a collaborative program in a time of financial constraint lies in administrative issues. Decisions regarding curriculum are far easier to make than choosing which institution will pay faculty salaries for the MAT and which institution will count both FTEs, credit hours generated, and students enrolled in the program. These concerns affect the economical health and programmatic strength of both institutions. These are among the data reported in each

institution's productivity reports. It was in this area that the viability of the MAT was questioned and compromise had to be made. Ultimately, the Memorandum of Understanding addressed issues such as a common tuition rate, student admissions, enrollment, grading, administration of field placements, faculty productivity counts, and faculty reimbursement. Considerable discussion from the department level through the presidential level occurred and compromises were made before the final document was approved. However, once it was finalized, this Memorandum of Understanding has proven to be invaluable to program implementation. It has been used as the blueprint for collaboration in other program areas in the two universities. The development and implementation of the memorandum was guided by a facilitator who has a joint appointment to both institutions.

Although the strengthening of ethnic diversity was not a primary purpose of the development of the Master of Arts in Teaching program, it was an inevitable outcome. The program consists of students and faculty of different cultural and racial backgrounds. Although UMES is an Historically Black Institution, it attracts students from many races and cultures; SSU attracts a primarily white student body, but a concerted effort is made to recruit and retain minority students. The experience of students interacting in the MAT cohort will give them opportunities to understand and appreciate their differences and value their similarities. Because the demographics of the local schools consist of many races, cultures, and socio economic groups, students will be better prepared for their field experiences if they have experienced cultural diversity and discussions of cultural variants in their course work.

Although the MAT has been successfully implemented, several obstacles to program development had to be overcome. The initial plan was for the development of a joint program which would result in students receiving a single diploma bearing the seals of both institutions. Such a complete merging of institutional resources and identities was not to occur. The resulting program is collaborative, but is not a single program offered jointly. Other barriers included the hurdles of organizational structures which slowed down program approval. Not surprisingly, some faculty suspected the collaborative MAT was the beginning of institutional merger and the loss of institutional identity. These were neither trivial issues nor issues which could be resolved in one or two meetings. Meeting these hindrances slowed down the development of the initiative; however, the time was well spent in building a positive and collaborative working relationship.

Through our leadership in guiding this program through development and implementation, we have learned that reform in higher education requires time, patience, and creative solutions. We have learned that change is a dynamic process and that ongoing, open, and honest, communication is essential. Although UMES and SSU are twelve miles from each other, in ways they are oceans apart. Successful leadership in this reform initiative required an equal commitment within each institution, from the faculty to the administration. It required individuals from both campuses who were willing to work together for a common goal. Our departments were willing to do this and it has resulted in an educational reform initiative in which we both take a great deal of pride.

SSU/UMES Collaborative Program

Master of Arts in Teaching

Memorandum of Understanding

The two universities collaboratively offering the M.A.T. degree agree to the following procedures as they pertain to the program's operation:

Admissions:

- Students in the M.A.T. will officially enter either SSU or UMES. Each student, though regarded as being part of a program cohort, has a designated home campus.

- Admissions procedures, including designation of cohort size, will be determined and carried out by a committee of equal representation from both institutions.

- Students must matriculate at the campus where there is a State-approved preservice program in their intended teaching field.

- In the event that both institutions have enough students to support two simultaneous joint cohorts, the chairpersons of the education departments will determine whether or not the second cohort will be offered. If one institution has the student enrollment for one joint cohort, and, in addition, has students to support a second entire cohort (20 students) while the other institution does not have students for a second cohort, the institution with the surplus of students may offer an independent cohort. This independent cohort will meet all requirements for admission and curriculum for the M.A.T.

Tuition:

- A uniform, fixed tuition rate, to be charged by both institutions, will be determined for the program by the appropriate officers at each institution.

- Because classes for the M.A.T. will meet during summer and winter terms, as well as during the fall and spring semesters, the tuition rate and schedule of payment will be in effect year round. This will include registration through inter-institutional registration.

Registration:

- The schedule of course offerings for the M.A.T. will be identical in the registration bulletins for both institutions. The Education Department chairpersons will coordinate the schedule in advance and provided complete information for publication. This will include course number, section, title, meeting dates and times, campus, building, room number, and instructor.

- Students whose home campus is the same as that of the faculty member teaching the course will register for courses and be billed by the registrar at their home institutions. Students on the other campus will register through inter-institutional registration. The registration bulletin will specify the procedures for registration for each course offered by stating: "SSU M.A.T. cohort students must register through inter-institutional registration" [when a UMES faculty member teaches the course] or "UMES M.A.T. cohort students must register through inter-institutional registration" [when a SSU faculty member teaches the course].

- Each course in the M.A.T. will be identified by a course prefix and number which will be the same on both campuses. Registrars will coordinate enrollment so that course tallies will reflect total enrollment from both campuses. Education Department chairpersons will monitor enrollments to assure that only cohort members, students accepted into the M.A.T. program, enroll in these courses.

- Student grades will be reported to the Registrar of the home institution of the faculty member who teaches the course. The registrar of that campus will report student grades to the other campus, using the procedures for inter-institutional registration.

Transcripts:

- Student transcripts will be maintained at the campus where the student matriculates.

Graduation/Diploma:

- Students will attend graduation and have their diplomas awarded from the institution of matriculation.

Curriculum:

- A uniform, designated course of study for the professional education sequence will be required of each student.

- The students' need for content-specific course requirements will be determined by the academic department with the state-approved program in which the matriculant intends to major. Transcripts will be analyzed for content adequacy and content needs, when judged beside the department's currently operating approved program sequences. The involved department for each content area will develop a check list which will be used to determine adequacy of content area course work and identify specific courses necessary for completion prior to a students' entry into the MAT program.

- Content methods courses will be offered as part of the professional education courses within the M.A.T.

- SSU and UMES will list the collaborative M.A.T. in their program inventories.

Classes:

- Professional education classes will be offered to the cohort at both institutions on an alternating structure.

Faculty:

- Assignment of faculty to teach in the program will be determined by the two education department chairpersons.

- For purposes of load count, credit hours accrue to the faculty member who teaches the class and to the campus which pays the salary of the faculty member.

Student Teaching Placement and Supervision:

- The securing of placements for student teaching and the arrangements for supervision of M.A.T. students during student teaching will be coordinated through the SSU/UMES Field Placement Collaborative.

Implementation:

- SSU and UMES will fulfill their mandated collaborative responsibilities by using a combined program decision and instructional team, requiring the same sequential course of study, and placing the same program information in their publications.

Evaluation:

- The development and administration of an instrument for the evaluation of program effectiveness will be coordinated by the SSU/UMES Office of Academic Collaboration in consultation with a mutually agreed upon external school evaluation agency.

Signatures:

Salisbury State University	University of Maryland Eastern Shore
_____	_____
Chair, Department of Education	Chair, Department of Education
_____	_____
Provost	Vice-President of Academic Affairs

THE MASTER OF ARTS IN TEACHING

The Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT) is a professional degree program designed to prepare students for initial teacher certification. Students in this program must possess an earned baccalaureate degree and appropriate content course work in a certification area. The MAT will offer students the professional education course work dealing with the knowledge and process of teaching in preparation for becoming a teacher at the secondary school level. Students will prepare for certification in the following State approved areas: agriculture, art, biology, business education, chemistry, English, French, history, mathematics, music (vocal and instrumental), physical education, Spanish and technology education. The Master of Arts in Teaching is a Maryland State Department of Education approved program for teacher certification.

The MAT is a collaborative degree program offered by Salisbury State University and the University of Maryland Eastern Shore. Students will be admitted to the MAT program by a joint admissions process and will take coursework on the campuses of both universities taught by the faculties of both institutions. Students will apply for admission to either Salisbury State University or the University of Maryland Eastern Shore, depending upon which university offers the appropriate Maryland State Department of Education approved content area program for teacher certification. Salisbury State University offers approved programs in the areas of: biology, chemistry, English, French, history, mathematics, music (vocal and instrumental), physical education, and Spanish. The University of Maryland Eastern Shore offers approved programs in the areas of: agriculture, art, biology, business education, chemistry, English, home economics, mathematics, music (vocal and instrumental), physical education, and technology education.

The primary objectives for the MAT program are:

* To allow students to build upon the content knowledge they have acquired in the baccalaureate degree, adding the professional knowledge necessary for a career in teaching.
* To prepare teachers who are well-grounded in research, theory, and practice related to effective classroom instruction and school improvement
* To enable teacher candidates to develop and demonstrate sensitivity and effective interpersonal skills in working with culturally diverse populations
* To nurture educators who are committed, continuous learners, and contributors to the enhancement of the teaching profession
* To encourage students to seek employment as teachers in the schools of the Eastern Shore.

The MAT combines the elements of pre-service teacher preparation and graduate-level scholarship and study. Research-based content, supervised clinical, and supervised practicum experiences are present throughout the program. Thus, the focus is made richer by the application of research findings, expert opinions, and best practices to instructional decision making. The program emphasizes reflective practice, continuous evaluation, and instructional modification to assure that students will develop an extended repertoire of teaching strategies. ***The Essential Elements of Teaching***, identified by the Maryland State Department of Education, will form significant strands throughout the program.

The professional education sequences of the MAT are a continuous part of the program and require visits to school-based settings or may take place in schools. Technological advances and their applications in the classroom are also included in the program's course of study. All matriculants must demonstrate proficiency in using computers and in applying technology usage to instruction.

Candidates in the Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT) are expected to complete the program in two summers and one academic year. Beginning with a full summer program, students will continue coursework during a full academic year (including the winter session) and one additional summer session. Students whose study is interrupted will be allowed to continue with a later cohort on a space-available basis.

Students in the MAT program will complete a State approved program of study including at least 36 semester hours of graduate credit with a cumulative average of B (3.0) or higher, with no more than six credit hours below a grade of B in their program. Students who completed the coursework required for the internship, have passed the PRAXIS Series (Professional Assessments for Beginning Teachers), and passed the comprehensive examination will be advanced to candidacy. Students must complete the degree within three calendar years of advancement to candidacy.

A maximum of six credits may be accepted for transfer into the program, provided those credits are directly related to the program and meet the university criteria for transfer of credit as specified in the general information section of the graduate catalog.

Admission to the Master of Arts in Teaching

Admission to the Master of Arts in Teaching program (MAT) is a two-step process. In addition to the general requirement for initial admission to Salisbury State University graduate study, the student must also make application for admission to the Master of Arts in Teaching program. Acceptance to graduate study does not constitute acceptance to the Master of Arts in Teaching program.

Students who indicate on their initial application that they wish to pursue the Master of Arts in Teaching will be assigned an advisor in the education department and receive MAT application materials. To be eligible for admission as a degree-seeking student to the Master of Arts in Teaching program, the prospective student must:

* Possess a baccalaureate degree in an appropriate content area, including adequate and current content area coursework in the intended certification area.
* meet all requirements for full admission to the graduate program
* Submit scores for the Core Battery of the PRAXIS Series, the Professional Assessments for Beginning Teachers

  (NOTE: Students must achieve passing scores which meet Maryland State standards on the Core Battery of the PRAXIS before beginning their Internship.)
* Undergo a structured interview by the joint MAT Admissions Committee
* Possess an undergraduate grade point average of at least 3.0 in the last half of the undergraduate program, or possess a prior graduate degree
* Submit a writing sample essay that is written on campus, in a supervised setting, and focuses on some current educational issues, as determined by the MAT Admissions Committee
* Submit official transcripts from all institutions attended

* Submit three letters of recommendation from individuals who can speak to the following criteria:
    1) ability to write at an appropriate skill level for graduate level work,
    2) a level of motivation appropriate to carry the candidate through a rigorous graduate program.
* Complete the Joint MAT Application Form, including a personal statement of purpose.

The transcripts and academic credentials of all applicants will be reviewed by the SSU UMES joint MAT admissions committee. Appropriate sub-committees will determine whether students possess adequate and current content area coursework in the intended certification area. Those students who lack appropriate coursework will be expected to take the identified courses prior to their enrollment in the internship.

Students in the MAT will also obtain a passing grade on a joint comprehensive examination as a condition for enrollment in the internship and advancement to candidacy.

Program of Study

Students who complete the Master of Arts in Teaching program will be expected to integrate theory and practice and demonstrate successful achievement in the following areas:

* application of research and inquiry for the improvement of classroom instruction
* understanding of learner's physical, cognitive, and emotional development and the implications for learning and instruction
* knowledge of the social contexts in which education occurs,
* skills and knowledge necessary to teach learners with special needs and diverse cultural backgrounds
* ability to organize and manage a classroom on the basis of research, best practice, expert opinion, personal attributes, and student learning needs
* development of skills in pedagogical analysis including the identification of problems confronting classroom teachers, formulation of solutions for resolution of problems, implementation of solutions, and examination of the effect of classroom interventions on student learning
* development of an appropriate and usable repertoire of teaching strategies and techniques
* appropriate use of a variety of approaches to assess instructional outcomes
* use of technology including computers and media for classroom and professional needs
* knowledge and skills necessary to incorporate reading, writing, and thinking in content area instruction
* skills and abilities essential to instructional leadership.

The course of study for the Master of Arts in Teaching will follow a sequence of courses which will include research, technology, foundations of education, methods and strategies of teaching, understanding and meeting the diverse needs of students, and field experiences. The courses required in the Master of Arts in Teaching include:

* Research and Technology I
* Development and Learning Applied to Teaching
* Social and Philosophical Foundations of Contemporary Education
* Principles of Curriculum and Instruction
* Reading and Writing in Content Areas
* Methods of Teaching and Assessment
* Methods of Teaching (for specific content areas)
* Inclusive Teaching for Diverse Populations
* Internship and Seminar
* Applied Research and Technology II

Each student is expected to develop an approved plan of study for completion of necessary content area coursework as well as the Master of Arts in Teaching program. Accordingly, it is essential that each student and advisor meet to clarify the specific requirements for individual candidates as well as the overall course of study.

Registration for Courses

Students in the Master of Arts in Teaching program will take courses on the campuses of both Salisbury State University and The University of Maryland Eastern Shore. The schedule of course offerings for the MAT will be listed in the registration bulletins of both universities. Salisbury State University students will register for all courses through the SSU registrar. When courses are offered at The University of Maryland Eastern Shore, students will register using the inter-institutional registration form. Procedures and forms for using inter-institutional registration will be available from the Office of the Registrar.